

# Collective Bargaining and the MYTH of Pay-Leveling



Some faculty members are wary of unionization because they fear that their salaries or salary increases might be reduced in order to raise the pay of lower-paid colleagues. They think that a faculty union might operate like a construction or auto-workers union and negotiate a flat wage for everyone. This is not how faculty unions work. An examination of many contracts negotiated by faculty unions reveals that pay is based on market value.

Below are contract provisions that pertain to four universities, three of which are Research 1 Universities (Rutgers, the University of Florida, the University of Connecticut, and one Research 2 University (Southern Illinois). [Rankings according to the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education]

**STARTING SALARIES:** No restrictions in any of the contracts, so offers reflect market value.

**MATCHING OFFERS:** No restrictions in any of the contracts and so competing offers can be matched.

**DIFFERENCES AMONG DISCIPLINES:** There are no restrictions in any of the contracts, so that market difference among disciplines can be reflected in salaries. Rutgers goes even further: "The University may, at its, discretion, increase the salary of a member or members of the bargaining unit in response to market conditions in a particular discipline or sub discipline."

**ADJUSTMENT FOR SALARY COMPRESSION:** All but UConn have contract requirements for adjustments.

**MERIT INCREASES:** Half to a third of the pay increases must be distributed based on merit, so that the larger the pay increase, the more merit money available.

**INCREASES ABOVE THOSE NEGOTIATED:** All four contracts give management the right to award additional increases above those in the contract.

## THE IDEA THAT UNIONIZATION LEVELS FACULTY PAY IS A MYTH.

At other universities, unionization has resulted in:

- higher annual pay increases
- relief from salary compression
- more merit pay
- salaries competitive by discipline with market levels

If you would like to share your ideas and advice or help in the campaign for a faculty union at UIUC, contact us at: